M 303 285 sides of this square and held in place by a binding of twisted raffia fibers. The sides are then plaited by the simplest method, that is, with the horizontal band weaving in and out of the vertical thongs. As all of these molds always have approximately the same height and diameter, the ngula cones are both similar in M 303 shape and quite constant in weight. The natives use them a great deal as trade goods. In some regions the ngula cone has become [436] a veritable currency, with a standard value from one tribe to another. [170] A market is organized regularly when steamers M [439] call at Mushie, and there the people of the interior exchange the products of their industries for the imported objects brought by the Blacks who work for the Whites. Ngula cones are among the principal items of trade and bring a very high price. In the Oshwe region, the old chief Kua Kua was a great ngula trader. He came by regularly with four or five of his wives, bringing various products from the region between the Kasai and the Lukenie to exchange for the ngula made in the Lokoro region.

D 303 Throughout the central Congo regions, the ngula used for trade has the shape of an elongated truncated cone. Among the Basongo-Meno and farther east, on the other hand, ngula most often is shaped in a ball. The native of these regions often uses it to decorate his pottery and wooden objects and to dye the fibers of cloth used for decoration. He keeps it in cosmetic boxes carved from takula wood and usually decorated with very artistic designs. He also uses it to color his hair. [Ed., a passage from the middle of page 170 to the last paragraph, page 171, is omitted.]

M 302 789 [171] Aside from ngula, the native sometimes smears his body with a type of white clay quite frequently found in the river beds. [172] The native calls it mpembe. Its use is far from being as widespread as that of ngula, and we believe that the native associates it with magic power rather than ornamentation. Mpembe is used chiefly by the peoples of the Congo-Kasai, Lake Leopold II, and Lukenie regions, up to the region of the Batitu.

M [765] We never saw a native smear his whole body with it. The few women in mourning that we saw were covered with a grayish-yellow mud and not with mpembe. We believe, moreover, that the use of mpembe is reserved to the chief, his wives, and perhaps

606 the act of procreation on the part of one of them. Perhaps this idea is latent in the native mind, or at least is at the basis of this rule. The fact that this hypothesis applies only to the wife's mother-in-law [mother?] does not weaken it; for in native eyes [291] the other instances are entirely without importance. (1)

1. See, for example, Chapter II, Article X, and Chapter V, Articles II and III.

606 292 Another regulation pertaining to the mother-in-law requires that she -- and all the women who are given the same title in current usage -- may appear in her son-in-law's village only when dressed in a boleleke. A boleleke is a banana leaf, either green or dried, which has been torn in several places perpendicularly to the large [765] central rib, and constitutes the first and principal sign of mourning. Moreover, Batswa women must also dress in this manner before entering a Baotó settlement. The following reason is given for the rule in the second instance: a Botswá woman's dress consists of a lolímba, a belt of small braided ropes about 10 centimeters long. Although in ordinary positions the lolímba provides fairly good protection, it is not considered adequate to really stop all indiscreet looks. And it is popularly believed that if a Bootó sees a Botswá woman's genital organs, she will die. Might we conclude from this last explanation that there is a fundamental connection between the reasons that necessitate the wearing of a boleleke in these three instances? Or is the mother-in-law to imitate a Botswá woman and thus show a certain subordination to her son-in-law?

2. Female relatives

607 837 As long as they are free, that is, as long as no bride-price payment has been made for them, a woman's sisters or cousins are considered by her husband as his wives, and he calls them so (basílf). This term is applied only to relatives of a generation below that of the true wife or to members of the same generation who are younger than she and with whom marriage [292] is permitted. It is therefore never

595^ [431] Thus a favorite is in every way the object of her husband's preference. He divides with her all presents he receives, while the other wives are not included in this expression of generosity. [853] But in the matter of sexual relations, apart from his trips, he has obligations to all of them. The most he can do is to add one night to the usual number (see below).

The co-wives adapt fairly well to this preferential system. Nevertheless, there is a good deal of backbiting on account of it. It may also happen that one or another of the wives is jealous to the point of being unable to bear it. [347] The signs of her rancor [544] multiply, and a divorce results in the end.

● [765] The nkɔ̄ndɛ́ does not have to go into mourning for anyone other than her husband. Even then she does not remove her clothing. But she does not have to abide by mourning regulations either for her parents or her own children.

[581] Like the other wives, the favorite is passed on through inheritance. But she cannot be taken as a bosɔ́lɔ́ by anyone except an elder brother of the deceased.

595^ 192 Nkɔ̄ndɛ́ is the specific term by which a favorite is designated. Its etymology is unknown to me. The word is used everywhere, although the Injɔ́lɔ́ often say lokílo (whose etymology is equally obscure). Another less common (older?) term known to the Bonkoso, Bongili, Wǐngatɛ, and Bakɛ́ala is bongílɛ or bongíjí (1). In addition

1. The Ekonda call the favorite bokɔ́lo. The Elanga of Losanganya say bofílɛ, a name borne by certain women among the Nkundɔ between Jwalɛ and Boloko. Might this also be an old name?

to the term ikundaka, already cited, there is also the word ebɛ́lɛ́kɛ́, a generic term meaning "preference, predilection" or, when applied to a child or a slave, "an object one does not want to dispose of." The favorite is also called ɛ́fɔ́kɛ́tɛ́mɛ́, "untouchable," because other men may not have relations with her.

152 rough behavior, only strangers married to village men (those known
593* as bɔ́a-ɓɔ́la). This ill treatment is often extended to close rela-
764 tives of the widower, that is, to those whom the women in ques-
tion call bɔ́ome, "potential husbands," never to fathers and higher
relatives. (1) The purpose of this practice seems to be to intensify,

1. See Chapter V, Article IV, 1, no. 3, and Chapter VI, Article VI.

by physical pain, the sorrow caused by death. In addition, provocatively obscene words, gestures, and movements remind the widower that from then on he must be continent, as described in extenso in the study cited above.

● 765 Afterwards, relatives dress the widower in a lisɔ́ki, a banana leaf which is torn all over horizontally. For all other mourning garments, as well as for all regulations and prohibitions that apply to all cases, see the detailed study.

The ill treatment described is not inflicted on the widow. It is meted out exclusively to men.

The general rules pertaining to seclusion apply to a widower; in fact they are especially severe for a man. His kinswomen prepare his simple meals. However, if his relations with his father-
[587] in-law were excellent, the latter sends a woman [420] to him who will attend to his needs. She often becomes his wife when, after the lifting of mourning, he brings the ibɔ́leɔ́ko (Chapter III, Article IV).

During the entire first period of seclusion, he cannot go anywhere, at least ostensibly. If he needs to go out, he must go through the back. If he wants to visit a relative or friend, he must go behind the huts, in the banana grove, even if it is evening. In any case, he may not leave the village. Such was the ancient law, though nowadays it is observed less and less.

Furthermore, he cannot have the slightest contact with any woman who is not a relative. He cannot even shake her hand, greet her out loud, or look at her even in passing.